SOME

QUERIES

TO

PROTESTANTS

ANSWERED.

And an EXPLANATION of the

Roman Catholick's *BELIEF*

IN

Four Great Points

CONSIDERED.

I. Concerning their *Church.*
II. Their *Worship.*
III. *Justification.*
IV. *Civil Government.*

IMPRIMATUR.

Ex Ædib. *Lambeth.* *Mar.* 4. 1685.

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OUTLETS

To the READER.

NOT many days since, I had some Papers put into my Hands; which so soon as I had an opportunity, I opened and perused. The first I found intituled, *some Queries to Protestants.* The next, *Queries of Religion or Liberty.* And the last, an *Explanation of Roman Catholick's Belief, concerning these 4 points. Their Church, Worship, Justification, and Civil Government, as it was presented to some Persons of Quality for their particular Satisfaction.* By these Papers I found that the Roman *Emissaries were very busie, compassing Sea and Land to gain Proselytes. And because they have had no good luck by open and fair dealing, they now take another course; They creep into Houses, and privately insinuate themselves into the acquaintance of unwary People. Which when they have once done, they begin their work; which is by puzzeling questions, and false representations of their Religion, to unfix the minds of men; and then take occasion of their unsetledness to draw them over to their party. Now seeing our Adversaries are so diligent, certainly it behooves us to be very watchfull; and by all lawfull ways and means to countermine their cunning Craftiness, and arm our selves against their devices. Upon this consideration, I thought it might be no disservice either to private Christians, or the Church of which I am a Member to take these Papers into consideration; and by shew,*

Anſwers to the Queries, and a brief Animadverſion upon the Explanation, to put weapons into the hands of others, wherewith they might defend themſelves againſt their Aſſaults.

This is the deſign of theſe few following ſheets, wherein I have ſtudied nothing more than Brevity and Plainneſs. To the firſt Paper of Queries I have given very ſhort anſwers, but I hope both plain and full. To the ſecond, becauſe the Queries ſeem to be contrived with more art and cunning, my anſwers thereunto are ſomewhat more large, but I hope, not too long. And upon the Explanation of their Belief in thoſe 4 great points, I have made ſuch Animadverſions, as I hope may ſatisfie any one, that the Explainer hath not dealt ſo fairly, nor ſo ingenuouſly with his Perſons of Quality, as he ought to have done.

Whether what is here done, will anſwer the deſign of doing it, or no, I know not; but hope, by God's Bleſſing it may. In confidence therefore of the Divine bleſſing and aſſiſtance, I now, Reader, commit it into thy Hands; deſiring onely this favour, that to the reading of it, thou wilt bring an humble and teachable temper of mind; which if thou doſt, I do not doubt but it may be in ſome meaſure ſerviceable to thee at this time. Which if it be, may God have the glory, and thou the comfort and advantage of it. This is and ſhall be the hearty Prayer of

Thy faithfull friend,
and fellow Chriſtian.

Some *QUERIES* to Proteſtants anſwered.

Qu. 1. *WHether Divine Revelation be not the entire object of Faith, which Faith is but one,* &c? Eph. 4. 4.

Anſ. Divine Revelation is both the rule ond object of Faith, whieh Faith is but one.

Qu 2. *Whether Faith muſt not give an undoubted aſſent to all things revealed?* Jam. 2. 18.

Anſ. If the Revelation be Divine, there ought not to be doubting of the things revealed.

Qu. 3. *Whether theſe Revelations do not contain in them many myſteries tranſcending the natural reach of humane wit or induſtry?* 1 Cor. 1. 10. Matth. 16. 17.

Anſ. There are many myſteries in Religion which are above the natural reach of humane wit and induſtry, above reaſon but not contrary to reaſon.

Qu. 4. *Whether it did not become the divine wiſedom and goodneſs to provide man ſome way or means whereby he might arrive to the knowledge of thoſe Myſteries?*

Anſ. Divine Wiſedom and goodneſs hath not been wanting in the proviſion of ways and means, whereby Man may arrive to the knowledge of thoſe Myſteries, ſo far as is neceſſary for his happineſs both here and hereafter.

Qu. 5. *Whether theſe means muſt not be viſible and apparent to all, proportionable to the capacity of all?* Joh. 9. 14. Mat. 11. 25. 1 Joh. 5. 22.

Anſ. The means appointed by God are viſible or inviſible, they are proportioned to the capacity of all, but it is not neceſſary they ſhould be viſible to all.

Qu. 6. *Whether theſe Myſteries were not taught by Chriſt and the Holy Ghoſt to his Apoſtles?*

Anſ. Whatever is contained in the Divine Revelation, was certainly taught by Chriſt and the Holy Ghoſt to the Apoſtles, for he made known unto them the whole Will of God.

Qu. 7. *Did not the Apoſtles teach theſe Doctrines in almoſt all places of the world, before the Scriptures were all of them written or acknowledged to be their writings, or collected into one Body?*

Anſ. The Apoſtles were faithfull Stewards, and did diſpenſe the Doctrine of the Goſpel faithfully and ſincerely in all places where they came, even before the Holy Scriptures were all written or collected into one Body.

Qu. 8. *When they began to write the Scriptures, did they profeſs that they writ in them all and every truth which had been delivered unto them, or did they onely write them upon emergent occaſions?*

Anſ. All and every truth neceſſary for the Salvation of mankind, is faithfully and fully delivered in the Holy Scriptures. And that being the deſign of them, we have no reaſon to be anxious or ſolicitous about any more.

Qu. 9. *Were all divine truths neceſſary for the Salvation of mankind, for the Government of the Church, and the confounding of Errours deſignedly and expreſly delivered in them?*

Anſ. The Scriptures are abundantly ſufficient to inſtruct all men in thoſe things which may ſecure their Salvation, and preſerve them from errour; And whatſoever is eſſentially neceſſary to the Being or good Government of a Church may there be found; but whatſoever may be accidentally neceſſary in reſpect of time and place, is left to the prudence of Governours.

Qu. 10. *Was not the ſenſe and meaning of this written word delivered at the ſame time to the Apoſtles Succeſſors?*

Anſ. The Apoſtles did explain the Mind and Will of God to all to whom they preached, and the written word being deſigned not onely for the learned but unlearned, was ſet down in ſuch intelligible words as might comport with the capacities of all.

Qu. 11. *Were not thoſe Succeſſors of the Apoſtles obliged under pain of damnation to deliver the ſenſe and meaning to their Succeſſors, and ſo conſequently to our days, or at leaſt no contrary ſenſe?*

Anſ. The Succeſſors of the Apoſtles in all Ages are undoubtedly oblig'd to deliver the true ſenſe and meaning of the Holy Scriptures to others; and it were to be wiſhed that none had failed of their duty therein.

Qu. 12. *Whether all that is mentioned in Scripture be not true, according to the ſenſe and meaning ſo delivered?*

Anſ. All that is mentioned in Scripture is undoubtedly true, according to the true ſenſe and meaning thereof.

Qu. 13. *Whether an obſtinate Contradiction of any one truth thus delivered in Scripture (though there appear no neceſſity it ſhould have been mentioned in Scripture) be not injurious to that divine Authority and veracity, and which unrepented of ſhall bring damnation?*

Anſ. An obſtinate contradiction of any one plain truth delivered in holy Scripture, is certainly a very great injury to divine authority and veracity.

Qu. 14. *When difficulties did ariſe about the ſenſe of Scriptures or matters of Faith, whither the diciſion of thoſe controverſies was carried, and whether the preſent Church of every Age was not to decide it?*

Anſ.

Anſ. It was undoubtedly the practice, and is moſt rational that the preſent Church in every Age ſhould decide ſuch controverſies. For, the Prieſt's Lips ſhould preſerve knowledge, and they ſhould enquire the Law at his mouth. And no queſtion the Church hath Authority to declare matters of Faith, but not to make any new Articles of Faith.

Qu. 15. *Whether every particular perſon was to have an Authoritative power in this deciſion, or whether it was not univerſally left to the Heads and Governours of the Church Aſſembled together?*

Anſ. Every particular perſon hath undoubtedly a Judgment of diſcretion allow'd him in matters of that nature, but the Authoritative power of deciding and determining was in the Heads and Governours of the Church Aſſembled together for that end.

Qu. 16. *Whether ſuch a force of Hopes or Fears could poſſibly happen at once upon all the Heads of the univerſal Church Aſſembled together, or after conſenting to thoſe that were Aſſembled, as ſhould make them declare that to be a truth revealed by Chriſt, which was not ſo delivered to them to have been the ever eſteemed ſenſe of Scripture or perpetual tradition which was not ſo?*

Anſ. Whilſt men are men they will be liable to hopes and fears, and ſubject to the power and force of them; if therefore we conſider the Heads and Governours of the Church as ſuch we cannot allow them an Exemption therefrom; and conſequently there may be no impoſſibility in the things propounded. We grant that in a General Council lawfully aſſembled, we have great reaſon to hope for the preſence, direction and aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt, but how far the paſſions and humours of men may fruſtrate our Hopes, we know not. This we certainly know, that the Acts of one Council have been made void by another, and therefore it is more than probable that one of them did declare ſomething to be a truth revealed by Chriſt, which was not ſo delivered unto them.

Qu. 17. *Whether the Deciſions of ſuch Aſſemblies or general Councils were not always eſteemed obligatory in the Church, and whether particular Perſons or Churches obſtinately gainſaying ſuch Deciſions received by a much Major part of the Church diffuſed, were not always eſteemed to have incurred thoſe Anathema's pronounced by ſuch Councils?*

Anſ. If thoſe Aſſemblies or Councils be truly general, we do very much reverence their Authority, and think their deciſions to be obligatory. But we do not think all to be ſuch that are called ſo; As for inſtance, The Council of *Trent* is by ſome ſort of men looked upon as a general Council, and all their Religion almoſt built upon the Authority thereof; and yet the Church of *England* never received the deciſions of that Council, nor did the *Gallican* Church for many years; and

yet

yet neither the one nor the other did for all that eſteem themſelves to have incurred the Anathema's pronounced by that Council.

Qu. 18. *Whether the univerſal Church did not in all Ages practice this way of deciding controverſies, and whether theſe be not as univerſal a tradition of this, as the practice was univerſal without interruption?*

Anſ. Univerſal practice will amount to an univerſal Tradition, and that this hath been the practice of the Church in all Ages, eſpecially in matters of great weight, we deny not; nor ſhould we oppoſe the ſame courſe now, provided the Council were free and general.

But the Enquirer goes on,

Some will perhaps ſay that ſuch Councils cannot Err in fundamentals but may in not fundamentals. I ask theſe,

Qu. *What are fundamentals and what not?*

Anſ. Thoſe things which are eſſentially neceſſary to the being of Religion may properly be called fundamental; but thoſe things which only reſpect order and decency therein, and vary according to time and place, and are alterable by the Governours of the Church, when they ſee cauſe theſe are not fundamental.

Qu. *Whether there be not ſome things fundamentals to the Church, whtch are not to every particular?*

Anſ. There may be ſome things fundamental to the Being of a Church, which are not ſo to every particular member of that Church, but whatſoever things are fundamental to the Being of Religion, are equally ſo to the whole Church and every member thereof.

Qu. *Whether an obſtinate denyal of what is fundamental or neceſſary to the univerſal Church, or granting as I may ſay upon what is fundamental by a particular perſon, be not in time a fundamental Errour, eſpecially after an univerſal declaration of it as truth delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles?*

Anſ. This Query as it is here worded is hardly reconcileable to ſenſe, but I ſuppoſe his meaning is, Whether for any particular perſon obſtinately to deny what is fundamental or neceſſary to the univerſal Church, and declared to be a truth delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles. be not a fundamental Errour? To which I anſwer. That every particular Chriſtian ought with all deference to ſubmit his own private Judgment to the publick Judgment of the Church, and though it do not appear ſo plain to him, yet he ought rather to ſuſpect his own than that of the Church. But if in ſome things he cannot be ſatisfied, and therein happen to differ from the Church, provided he do not thereby break the peace and unity of the Church, it will hardly amount to a fundamental Errour. But what if it be declared by the Church to be

a truth

a truth delivered by Christ and his Apostles, will not that make it so? To this I answer, That no declaration of the Church, how universal soever it be, can make that to be a truth delivered by Christ and his Apostles, which really is not so And therefore in that case we must have recourse to their Writings, and if it be not either in expres's words contained therein, or by sound consequence drawn therefrom, we ought not to comply with it, nor is it a fundamental Errour to differ therein.

Qu. *Whether the universal Church assembled in a General Council ought not to be justly esteemed the decider of what is fundamental, and what not?*

Ans. When the universal Church by her proper Representatives is lawfully assembled in a Council truly General, that Council without all dispute will be a very proper Judge of what is fundamental, and what not; but this is rather to be prayed than hoped for.

Qu. *Whether an obstinate denial of any one truth delivered by Jesus Christ or his Apostles (though the delivery was not absolutely necessary to Salvation) may not be called a fundamental errour, seeing it brings the rest he delivered in question, as also his veracity?*

Ans. The denial of any one truth delivered by Jesus Christ or his Apostles is a very great fault, and if that denial be obstinately continued in, after plain conviction that it is such a truth, it is a very dangerous Errour.

Qu. *Whether therefore the denial of any one truth delivered to us by an uninterrupted tradition, as taught by Christ and his Apostles, would not be a fundamental Errour?*

Ans. There is a great difference between a thing delivered as taught, and plainly taught, by Christ and his Apostles; for we meet with many things delivered as taught by them. and tradition pretended for them, which really and in truth were never taught by them, or either of them; and to deny such is so far from being a fundamental Errour, that it is no Errour at all. There is also a great difference between traditions. If by tradition he mean the holy Scriptures, we grant that to deny any thing that is plainly and clearly taught therein, is a very great Errour: But if by tradition he mean such as is meerly humane, and not clearly warranted by the Word of God, we think we ought to reject such, how uninterrupted soever they be; for *if an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel than hath been preached, let him be accursed*, saith St. *Paul*.

Qu. *And on the other side, whether the teaching of any Doctrine (onely piously believed, but) sufficiently known not to have been expresly, or by a natural consequence delivered by Christ and his Apostles, and which may upon that account be false, not having Divine Revelation (which alone is in-*

 fallible)

fallible) for its ground; whether, I ſay, the teaching ſuch a Doctrine ſo known, as one that was delivered by Chriſt, (when they know it was not) would not be a fundamental Errour?

Anſ. Whoſoever teacheth ſuch Doctrines as are mentioned in this Query, and in that manner, is highly guilty; and when the Enquirer ſhall think fit to be more particular, and produce his inſtances, he may expect a more particular anſwer, and perhaps be told at whoſe door this charge will lie: In the mean time this general anſwer may ſuffice.

Qu. *Whether Chriſt having taken care (as ſome grant) that his Church ſhould not err in fundamentals, hath not conſequently taken care that ſhe ſhould not teach any one Doctrine as delivered by Chriſt, and conſequently of Faith, which was not taught by him, and conſequently might be an Errour?*

Anſ. Chriſt hath taken all care poſſible to ſecure his Church from Errour, and hath given her his gracious promiſe to be with her to the end of the World. But the Church being compoſed of men, and ſuch as are fallible, the ſecurity is not promiſed to particulars. Particular perſons, and particular Churches too, we know, not only may, but have, groſly erred. The ſecurity therefore is only promiſed to the Univerſal Church; and when he tells us what he means by that, he may expect a more direct anſwer to his Query.

Qu. *Whether thoſe Doctrines, or moſt of them, controverted now by Proteſtants, have not been taught and believed in the Church as Doctrines delivered by Chriſt, long before* Luther, *yea and delivered in the moſt General Councils thoſe Ages would permit, and accepted of by the Church diffuſive, none that we know of diſſenting, but thoſe condemned in thoſe Councils for Hereticks, and whoſe Hereſies expired almoſt with themſelves?*

Anſ. It is now plain that this Enquirer, by the Church, and univerſal Church ſo often mentioned by him, doth all along mean the Church of *Rome*, which we are ſo far from complying with him in, that though we own that Church to be a Member, yet we cannot allow it to be a ſound Member of the Catholick Church. And if by the Deciſions and Declarations of the Church, he mean the determinations of that Church, they are no further obligatory than to her own Members, nor many of them to them neither, if ſtrictly enquired into. As for *Luther*, we do not receive our Religion from him, but from Jeſus Chriſt; and for any Doctrines now controverted, we are content to have the ſame determined by the Holy Scriptures, and the four firſt General Councils. As for the Councils our Enquirer hints at, we deny that they were truly General, or that all their deciſions were ever accepted of by the Church diffuſive. And he cannot but know that there were many more, not only Perſons, but whole Churches, which did diſſent from them.

Qu. *Whether there was from the firſt 400 years, till the time of* Luther,

any

any known body of Paſtors and Teachers declaring a diſſent in any Age from thoſe Doctrines, and oppoſing thoſe Councils; and whether the Greek *Churches did not, and do to this very day conſent with this Weſtern Church in moſt points now controverted by Proteſtants?*

Anſ. This Query is prepoſterouſly put, for how ſhould any body of Paſtors and Teachers in the firſt 400 years oppoſe themſelves to thoſe Councils which were not then in being, nor heard of till many hundred years afterwards? But that the Fathers in thoſe firſt Ages did teach the ſame Doctrines we now do, we appeal to the Records of thoſe times. And that thoſe after-Councils by him mentioned, were diſſenters from thoſe of the firſt Ages, we are contented to be tried by comparing the Acts of both together. And that the *Greek* Church did, or now doth, agree with the Church of *Rome* in all or moſt of thoſe points now in difference between her and us, we utterly deny, and challenge him to the proof of it.

Qu. *Whether* Luther (*the firſt Author of Proteſtancy*) *did not ſeparate himſelf from the whole viſible Church at that time ſpread over the Weſt, contradicting all the Prelates and Paſtors then living in the univerſal practice of that Church, and the General Councils received as ſuch by the foregoing Ages?*

Anſ. As for the names of *Proteſtant* and *Papiſt*, I look upon them as names of diſtinction, not of Religion. The Religion we both own is Chriſtian: This we do not receive from *Luther*, nor they from *Ignatius Loyala*, St. *Francis*, or any ſuch, but both of us from Jeſus Chriſt; The only queſtion is, Whether they or we hold that Religion in greateſt purity? 'Tis true that *Luther* in his time did more narrowly look into the corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, declared againſt them, and on that account ſeparated from her Communion, and for any thing yet appears may be very well juſtified in ſo doing. For, if any Church ſhall make terms of her Communion ſo ſinful and dangerous that no man with ſafety to his Soul can continue in it, it will be high time to come out of it.

Qu. *Whether he or Proteſtants at preſent do pretend to ſuch Demonſtration for thoſe Tenets they hold contrary to the* Roman *Church, (the then onely viſible Church in the Weſt) that no underſtanding, to which it is ſufficiently propoſed, can in the leaſt doubt of it?*

Anſ. We have ſuch evidence for the Doctrines which we hold and teach in oppoſition to the Church of *Rome*, as, being ſufficiently propoſed, no man can reaſonably doubt of. And as for thoſe who will ſcruple without reaſon, notwithſtanding the cleareſt evidence that the nature of the thing will bear, we can only pity and pray for them.

Qu. *Or whether they do not rather ſay, that being fallible, they may err,*

even in what they think a Demonſtration ; and if they may err, perhaps they have erred even in their Reformation?

Anſ. We do not pretend to infallibility, nor do we think that the claim which the Biſhop of *Rome* makes to it is any more than a groundleſs pretence only. But *à poſſe ad eſſe non valet conſequentia*, from a bare poſſibility of erring, to argue a certainty that we have erred in every thing we have done, is an argument fitter to be offered to Children than Men.

Qu. *Whether therefore denying theſe Doctrines thus delivered by the Church in all Ages, as Doctrines delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, upon no better grounds than theſe*, perhaps they may be true, and perhaps not, *be not a putting ones ſelf into the danger of erring even in fundamentals?*

Anſ. We deny no Doctrines delivered by the Church in all Ages, as Doctrines delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles; nor do we own any Doctrine upon ſuch weak grounds, as *perhaps they may be true, and perhaps not.* But we ſay, that the preſent Church of *Rome* doth teach ſuch Doctrines as the Doctrines of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, which were never taught by the Church in all Ages, nor delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles; And in theſe things we oppoſe our ſelves againſt them, and think we have great reaſon ſo to do, having the holy Scriptures and the Primitive Church on our ſide. And whilſt we are thus ſupported, we have no fear of erring in fundamentals.

Queries of Religion or Liberty.

WHo this Enquirer is, as I am at preſent ignorant, ſo am I not much concern'd to know ; but I take him to be one who hath conceived a mighty opinion of himſelf and his performances. He thinks that by theſe Queries he hath ſtruck at the root of *Proteſtancy*, (as he and thoſe of his Perſwaſion call it) *i. e.* Reformed Chriſtianity, that he hath given it a fatal blow, a mortal wound, and left it groveling in the duſt without the leaſt hopes of recovery. Like that overgrown, uncircumciſed *Philiſtine*, he defieth the Armies of the Living God, and calls for a Man to fight with him ; For, in the cloſe of his *Queries* he maketh this proud and confident challenge.

> *If any give anſwer, (* As if he ſhould have ſaid, if any be ſo bold and daring, ſo over confident and fool-hardy, as to undertake an Anſwer to theſe Queries) *It is deſired to be Categorical and ſhort, without any diſcourſes of things not demanded.*

Now whether this man do not triumph before the Victory, or whether thoſe Queries be ſo unanſwerable as he believes them to be, is the thing under conſideration. And becauſe he hath not only given the Challenge, but appointed the Weapon, I ſhall neither decline the one, nor

nor the other, but according to his own method ſhall undertake his Queries in the ſame order as he hath propounded them.

Qu. 1. *Whether the Flock and Church of Chriſt (to whom was promiſed grace and eternal happineſs) be that company and ſociety of People chriſtened in his Name, who by order of Government, Rules, and Decrees, from him and his Apoſtles, were united in Faith, Worſhip, Diſcipline, and manner of Life, called Religion?*

Anſ. The Church of Chriſt is either Militant or Triumphant, the one on Earth, the other in Heaven; of the former of which we are now to ſpeak. The Church Militant is either Univerſal, or Particular; the former comprehending all and every Member of Chriſt's Myſtical Body, whereſoever diſperſed upon the face of the whole Earth; the latter comprizing only a certain Number of Chriſtians formed into a ſelect Body or Society, under certain Laws and Rules not differing from thoſe of the Univerſal Church. Such are all Provincial and National Churches; and though none of them may arrogate to themſelves the Title of *the One, Holy, Catholick, and Apoſtolick Church*, yet none will deny but that they are true Members thereof. This I have premiſed to prevent confuſion and miſunderſtanding: for the confounding of theſe two, as it often happens in diſcourſes of this kind, hath been the occaſion of great miſtakes. Thoſe of the *Romiſh* Perſwaſion, by *the One, Holy, Catholick, and Apoſtolick Church*, do uſually underſtand the Church of *Rome*, which though it be a manifeſt Contradiction, being the ſame with a Particular Univerſal, yet do they run away with it, and by that ſpecious and gorgeous Title think to bear down all before them, aloud proclaiming that to be the Mother and Miſtreſs of all other Churches. This thus premiſed, I ſhall now be as Categorical and ſhort in my Anſwer to his Query, as he can deſire: *Viz.* That the Flock and Church of Chriſt is a Company or Society of People Chriſtned in his Name, who by Order of Government, rules, and decrees from him and his Apoſtles, are united in Faith, Worſhip, Diſcipline, and Manner of Life, called Religion.

Qu. 2. *Whether by Separation or Excommunication from that Society and Unity are loſt thoſe promiſes?*

Anſ. Separation and Excommunication are two things, for, though every one that is excommunicated be thereby ſeparated from that body, of which before he was a member; yet a man may be in a ſtate of Separation, without being under the doom of Excommunication. For Separation may be a voluntary Act, whereas Excommunication is a formal and Judicial Sentence, delivered by a lawful Judge, authorized and appointed by the Church to pronounce the ſame; by virtue whereof the ſentenced perſon is divided from the Body, ſeparated from the

the Society, and ſhut out of the Communion of God's Church. The caſe thus ſtated, my anſwer to this Query will be as followeth, *viz.*

1. Whoſoever, upon any pretence whatſoever, doth ſeparate himſelf from the Society and Unity of the *One, Holy, Catholick, and Apoſtolical Church*, doth in ſo doing caſt himſelf out of the paternal care and protection of God. For, it is a certain and undoubted truth, He that hath not the Church for his Mother cannot have God for his Father. And conſequently can have no pretence to the promiſes of grace here, or eternal happineſs hereafter.

2. Whoſoever without juſt cauſe, doth ſeparate himſelf from the Society and Unity of that particular Church of which he is a member, is guilty of a ſinful and dangerous Schiſm; and whilſt he continues therein can have no reaſon to expect the bleſſing of thoſe promiſes.

3. That there may be ſometimes a juſt cauſe of Separation, as when a Church makes the conditions of her Communion ſuch, as a man cannot communicate with her, without ſin and danger. But in this caſe particular members ought to be mighty wary and cautious; for, it is not every diſſatisfaction of their own, or every irregularity of that Church, that will be a ſufficient cauſe of Separation, unleſs the terms of her Communion be manifeſtly and apparently ſinful.

4. That the great end and deſign of Excommunication is the repentance and amendment of the perſon excommunicated. It doth not therefore make void the promiſes of God, nor utterly deprive the ſentenced perſon of the benefits thereof, but onely by a temporary correction ſhews him his folly and danger, and calls upon him by a timely repentance and amendment to recover himſelf out of the one, and prevent the other. But it muſt be acknowledged, that if a man obſtinately continue in that condition, and live and die under that ſentence, his condition will be very dangerous.

Theſe may ſerve as general Anſwers to this Query, but if by the Separation or Excommunication here mentioned, be meant, (as no queſtion it is) a Separation of Excommunication from the Society and Unity of the Church of *Rome*; Then we have this further to ſay.

1. That the preſent Church of *Rome* hath ſeparated her ſelf from the *One, Holy, Catholick and Apoſtolick Church*, by ſetting up ſuch Doctrines and practices as were never taught, practiſed, nor allowed either by Chriſt or his Apoſtles, or their Succeſſors in the Primitive Church.

2. That the preſent Church of *Rome* hath made the conditions of her Communion, ſuch as none without ſin and danger can Communicate with her, and by that means hath jnſtified a Separation from her.

3. That the Church of *Rome* hath not, nor ever had any lawful

Power

Power or Authority over the Church of *England*; nor are we Subject to the Jurisdiction of that See, whether we consider it as Episcopal, or as Metropolitan, or as Patriarchal; and therefore we cannot be justly charged with a Separation therefrom. It is true indeed that for some time she had Tyrannically usurped an unjust power over us, and kept us in Bondage and Slavery to her; but, God be thanked, we at last found an opportunity to shake off those Chains, and deliver our selves from the servitude under which we had so long groaned. And this we have done, and are still ready to justifie to the whole world to be no sinful Separation.

4. That an Excommunication thundered out by the Church of *Rome* against us of the Church of *England*, is but only *Brutum fulmen*, an insignicant Scare-Crow, which upon mature consideration, we have no cause to be afraid of; for she having no power over us, we are not accountable to her, nor subject to any sentence pronounced by her; And therefore notwithstanding that pretended Separation or Excommunication from the Society and Unity of that Church, which they make so much noise with, we are in no apprehension of losing the benefits of those promises, which God hath made to his One, Holy, Catholick and Apostolick Church, of Grace here and Eternal Happiness hereafter.

Qu. 3. *Doth Christian Religion consist in matters of Morality or Ceremony, of indifferency to be accepted, or rejected, and altered at the Choice Judgment and well liking of private Persons, Corporations, or States?*

Ans. Religion in general may be considered either in its Essentials, or as it is cloathed with Circumstantials. The former of which are unalterable, but the latter may be subject to change. The Christian Religion in particular falls under the same consideration, the Being whereof consists indeed in matters of Morality, which being instituted and ordained by Christ are not alterable by Men. But the order and decency, which are things necessary to the well being of that Religion, consists in Ceremonies and things indifferent, which are in their own nature alterable, and being the institutions of Men, may be altered by Men; but not by any private Persons: For whatsoever hath been established by the whole Body, cannot be altered by any particular member, or any number of Men, who are members of that Body, nor by any Authority less than that, by which at first it was established. And here the Church of *Rome* may do well to consider by what power and authority she hath made so bold with the very Essentials of the Christian Religion, altering some and adding others, making new Articles of Faith, which were never taught by Christ nor his Apostles, and imposing them as necessary to be believed by all those of her Communion.

Qu. 4.

Qu. 4. Or *doth it conſiſt in the Laws and Rules of Faith, and life of Chriſtians, ſo important and binding, as that by the contempt thereof one muſt loſe Eternal Happineſs?*

Anſ. This Query is very little different from the former, and hath, I think, received a ſufficient anſwer in the ſolution of that For by matters of Morality there, wherein I ſay the being of the Chriſtian Religion doth conſiſt; I mean Moral and unchangeable truths, which are to be received and believed by all Chriſtians, and Moral actions which are to be done by them: and for our belief and performance of theſe things, we have ſuch laws and rules delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, as are binding unto all; the contempt wherof may very much endanger, and without a ſerious and ſeaſonable repentance and amendment will certainly forfeit eternal happineſs. And therefore it will highly concern the Church of *Rome* to conſider, whether ſhe be not guilty of ſuch contempt, whether in ſome of her publick Orders and Decrees ſhe have not apparently contradicted ſome of theſe important Laws and Rules?

Qu. 5. *Whether thoſe Laws and Rules taught by Chriſt and his Apoſtles bind as well the Chriſtians of ſucceeding Ages (who could not be preſent to ſee and hear them) as they bound thoſe who were preſent, heard them taught, and ſaw their Original Writings?*

Anſ. That theſe Laws and Rules are as binding to me now, as they were to any of the Diſciples in our Saviour's or his Apoſtles time, I willingly grant. And if this conceſſion will do this Enquirer any ſervice, much good may do him with it. For, if the ſeeing of the Original Writings of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, or being preſent to hear them deliver thoſe Laws and Rules, were neceſſary to make them obligatory, then ought we to have Chriſt and his Apoſtles come down from Heaven, and write and preach the ſame things over again, not only in every Age, but in every year & every day of that year, and in all places of the world too. But let us proceed, and ſee what mighty uſe this Enquirer will make of this wire drawing this Query.

Qu. 6. *Whether after the death of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and Diſciples, by his inſtitution other perſons ſucceſſively in all Ages were in order choſen, and Authorized as Paſtours and Church Magiſtrates, to preſerve, teach, and promulgate thoſe binding Rules to all Nations?*

Anſ. That the bleſſed Jeſus, out of his abundant care and goodneſs, for the carrying on of that great work which he had begun, for the promoting of that holy Religion which he had inſtituted, and the well ordering of that Church which he had founded, did appoint certain orders of Men. and endow them with gifts which might qualifie them for their ſeveral employments, we do verily believe. For St. *Paul* tells

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us, God hath ſet ſome in the Church, firſt Apoſtles, ſecondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, after that Miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diverſities of tongues, 1 *Cor.* 12. 28. And in another place he ſaith, He gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtours and Teachers, *Eph.* 4 11. But that he ever inſtituted any Officer in the Church, by the name of a Church-Magiſtrate, I never read. Yet if by his Church-Magiſtrate, he mean no more than St. *Paul* doth, by Governments, we ſhall not quarrel with him about the word. And that it was the work of theſe Officers to preſerve thoſe Laws and Rules which he left, and to teach and promulgate them to all Nations, we readily grant. But then what ſhall we think of thoſe, who either add thereto, or diminiſh therefrom; who either alter thoſe binding Laws and Rules, or make new ones of their own, and impoſe them upon others as if they were of equal Force and Authority with thoſe delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles? I could eaſily give inſtances, to ſhew that the Church of *Rome* is guilty both ways; but I am not willing to tranſgreſs the method which the Enquirer hath propounded, by entring upon diſcourſes of things not demanded.

Qu. 7. *Were they Clergymen or Laymen by whom immediately they were choſen, and authorized in thoſe high Functions?*

Anſ. We do verily believe, being well aſſured by the Holy Scriptures, by the Doctrine and practice of the Apoſtles and primitive Chriſtians, and by the uſage and cuſtome of the Church of God in all Ages, that it onely appertains to Clergymen, by the ſolemn impoſition of hands to ſet apart others to thoſe Sacred Functions, and that they have ſufficient Power and Authority to authorize them to perform thoſe Holy Offices. I never heard this denied by any of the Reformed Religion, and therefore this Enquirer might, if he had ſo pleaſed, have ſpared this Query.

Qu. 8. *Were all Chriſtians in ſucceeding Ages bound to believe what thoſe ſucceeding Paſtours or Supreme Church-Magiſtrates taught them, as binding Laws of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and that the Writings by them collected, preſerved, and delivered in a different Language from the Original, were the true Copies of Original Apoſtolick Writings, and that the ſentence, interpretation and uſe thereof delivered by them in Supreme Councils for unity and peace, and to prevent Schiſms and Errours, were Rules which all Chriſtians were bound to follow?*

Anſ. This Query is a Song of three parts, to anſwer all which directly, I ſhall be obliged to take it in pieces, and conſider the parts ſeverally. And though the Anſwers thereunto would very well admit, and do almoſt neceſſarily require a long diſcourſe; yet I remem-

ber the Enquirer hath confined me to a Method, which I have promiſed to obſerve, and therefore in my anſwers thereunto I ſhall be as ſhort as poſſible, without entring upon diſcourſes of things not demanded.

Qu. 1. *Were all Chriſtians in ſucceeding Ages bound to believe what thoſe ſucceeding Paſtors or Supreme Church-Magiſtrates taught them, as binding Laws of Chriſt and his Apoſtles.*

Anſ. Whatever hath been taught as a binding Law of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, by all the Paſtors and Governours of the Church in all Ages, at all times, and in all places, we have no reaſon to ſuſpect. For Chriſt hath promiſed to be with his Church to the end of the World, *Matt.* 28. 20. And to build it upon a Rock, ſo that the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it, *Matt.* 16. 18. And by his ſpirit of truth, to guide it into all truth, *Joh.* 16. 13. The univerſal Church therefore being thus ſecured from errour, we have no apprehenſions of being deceived thereby. But though we owe this deference to the One, Holy, Catholick and Apoſtolick Church, and the united Body of the Paſtors and Governours thereof, yet no particular Church, nor any particular Paſtor or Governour thereof, nor any number of them, leſs than the whole, have any reaſon to claim the ſame; for, whilſt Men are Men, they are and will be fallible, and being ſo, they may and oftentimes do err, and though the whole Body cannot yet any particular Member may be deceived; and therefore we ought not greedily to ſwallow all that is taught by them, but to examine well what they teach, before we give our aſſent thereunto, otherwiſe we may eaſily be impoſed upon.

Qu. 2. *Were all Chriſtians in ſucceeding Ages bound to believe, that the writings collected* by thoſe ſucceeding Paſtors or Supreme Church-Magiſtrates, and by them *preſerved and delivered in a different Language from the Original, were the true Copies of Original Apoſtolick Writings?*

Anſ. That the Holy Scriptures were faithfully collected and preſerved by the Church, and that the Copies handed down to us, though in a Language different from the Original, are true Copies, we do not at all doubt. For, we cannot imagine that the univerſal Church ſhould conſpire together to impoſe a falſhood upon poſterity. But that theſe Scriptures are the Word of God we believe not onely upon the Authority of the Church, but for ſeveral other reaſons, as this *Gent.* cannot but know, if he have been converſant in our Writings: which reaſons might here fitly be produced, if I were not confined by the Enquirer to a ſhort Method, and had promiſed to obſerve the ſame. I ſhall therefore onely add that if by being bound to believe he means, that it is a binding Law of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, that for this reaſon we ſhould believe thoſe Copies to be true; we deny it, becauſe

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we cannot find any ſuch Law delivered by them. But if (by being bound to believe) he onely mean, that conſidering by whom they are handed to us, we have no reaſon to doubt of them; we readily comply with him.

Qu. 3. *Were all Chriſtians in ſucceeding Ages bound to believe, that the ſentence, interpretations and uſe of thoſe Writings delivered by thoſe Paſtors or Supreme Church-Magiſtrates in Supreme Councils for Unity and Peace, and to prevent Schiſms and Errours, were Rules which all Chriſtians were bound to follow?*

Anſ. What this Enquirer meaneth by Supreme Church-Magiſtrates and Supreme Councils, is ſomewhat hard to be underſtood; for to conſtitute two Supremes in one and the ſame body will make it look a little monſtrous. If by the Council being Supreme, he mean that is above the Supreme Church-Magiſtrate (*i. e.* the Pope, for I do not doubt but that he intends him all along by that Expreſſion) I am afraid his Holy Father will give him but ſmall thanks for that opinion. But if, by his Supreme Church-Magiſtrate, he mean that the Pope is above tha Council, then what ſignifieth the ſentence or interpretation of a Council, if not confirmed by him? So that till this caſe be rightly ſtated, and agreed upon amongſt them, both they and we ſhall be at a loſs, whoſe declaration is to be the Rule, which we are bound to follow. We do highly reverence the Authority of Counci's truly general, and for any thing in difference between us and the Church of *Rome*, we dare appeal and ſtand to the determination of the four firſt general Councils. But to be Hood winkt, and bound up by an implicit Faith, to receive and embrace every thing, that is offered to us, by thoſe who call themſelves Paſtors, or Supreme Church-Magiſtrates, or by every Convention which calls it ſelf a Supreme Council, is more than we can conſent to, and more indeed than either Chriſt or his Apoſtles required of their hearers. When neither the Doctrine preached by Chriſt, nor the Miracles done by him for the confirmation of that Doctrine, could convince the ſtubborn and unbelieving *Jews*, that he was the *Meſſiah*, whither doth he ſend them? he bids them ſearch the Scriptures, *Joh.* 5. 39. And St. *Paul* highly commends the *Bereans*, ſaying, They were more noble than thoſe of *Theſſalonica*, in that they received the word with all readineſs of mind, and ſearched the Scriptures daily, whether thoſe things were ſo, *Act.* 17. 10, 11. Our Saviour and his Apoſtle St. *Paul*, did not troub'e their hearers with puzling queſtions. Whether thoſe Writings were the Word of God? How they were aſſured that they were ſo? What was the ſenſe and meaning of them? How they came to know it, *&c.* Nor did they ſend them to the Sanhedrim, or any other Council to be inſtructed

therein; but they ſend them directly and immediately to the Scriptures themſelves. It was taken for granted then, and ought to be ſo now, that the Writings tranſmitted to them and us, did really and indeed contain the Word of God, and both our Saviour and St. *Paul* well knew, that God had delivered his mind in words ſo intelligible, that there was no fear of ſending any one thereunto. And indeed it were an unreaſonable thing that every private Chriſtian ſhould be obliged to conſult what ſenſe and meaning is put upon the Holy Scriptures by a general Council, before he receive and embrace them. Nor will it ſuffice to ſay, that they may learn it from their Paſtors and Teachers, for how ſhall they know that their Paſtors and Teachers underſtand it any better than they do, or if they do, that they give them the true and genuine ſenſe and interpretation, for they may with as much reaſon ſuſpect them, as they can thoſe Copies of the Sacred Writings which they have, though in a Language different from the Original. So that at this rate, Chriſtians will be involved in ſuch Intricacies and Meanders, that they will never know what they ſhould believe, and what not. And therefore, though we have a great veneration for what is delivered by Councils truly General, yet can we not conſent that that is the onely rule which all Chriſtians ought to follow.

Qu. 9. *If not then, What other order was there left by Chriſt and his Apoſtles for the Chriſtians of ſucceeding Ages, to be truly and undoubtedly informed what Chriſt and his Apoſtles taught, or wrought ſo many Ages before, as binding Laws to them that ſhould come after, who never heard them ſpeak, nor ſaw any of their Original Writings?*

Anſ. Even the ſame which our bleſſed Saviour recommended to the *Jews*, and St. *Paul* ſo highly commended in the *Bereans*, *i. e.* to ſearch the Scriptures, which whoſoever doth, and that with an humble and teachable temper of mind, may therein eaſily diſcover ſuch evident footſteps of Divinity, as will plainly ſpeak their Original, and ſufficiently inform us whence they are, and by what manner of Perſons they were written. Therein may we find all things neceſſary to our Salvation writ in Characters ſo legible that he that runs may reade them, ſo plain and eaſie, that the meaneſt capacity may underſtand them. So that to fortifie our perſwaſion that theſe are the Laws and Rules delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, if we had no other way left us, this alone might ſuffice. But if any private Chriſtian meet with any thing therein, which requires ſome help for ſatisfaction, he hath Paſtors and Teachers at hand to apply himſelf unto, who are an Order of men inſtituted by Chriſt for that very end and purpoſe; and in whom, if he hath not ſome apparent reaſon to the contrary, he ought to repoſe great confidence.

Qu. 10. *Whether to the Teſtimonies and Decrees of thoſe ſucceeding Paſtors and Supreme Church-Magiſtrates, and to their ſentence given upon the Controverſies of Religion, riſen in divers Ages, is due, at leaſt, as much Credit and Obedience (although perhaps ſome of them might be vicious in Life) as in temporal matters is due to the Laws, Interpretations and Sentences of Supreme Civil Magiſtrates?*

Anſ. That as much Credit and Obedience is due to the Teſtimonies and Decrees of the Paſtors and Governours of the Church in matters of Religion, as to the Laws, Interpretations and Sentences of Civil Magiſtrates in temporal matters, I readily grant. But then we may do well to conſider how far that Credit and Obedience ought to extend both in the one and other Caſe. For, as in temporal matters, if the Commands of the Civil Magiſtrate do concern matters of Faith, *i. e.* things which I am required to believe; in that Caſe his Laws ought to be ſo clear and evident, as may convince my reaſon and judgment, otherwiſe I am not bound, by a blind reſignation to ſurrender up my faith and belief; for it is not in the power of man to make me think otherwiſe than I do, without ſuch convincing reaſons as may ſatisfie me that I think amiſs. But if I cannot believe as he would have me to believe, yet ought I not by publickly oppoſing his Sentiments, to raiſe a Faction, and thereby diſturb the Peace of that State in which I live. Or if the Commands of the Civil Magiſtrate concern matters of Fact, wherein my obedience is required; in that caſe if I can with a ſafe conſcience and without diſobeying God do it, I ought actively to obey the Civil Magiſtrate, but if I cannot do it without diſpleaſing God, and wounding my own Conſcience, in that caſe I ought not to reſiſt, but paſſively to obey; For, here the Apoſtle's Rule will hold good. Whether it be better to obey God or Man, judge ye? So in matters of Religion. If the Teſtimonies and Decrees of the Paſtours and Governours of the Church do concern matters of Faith, I do acknowledge that there is a great deference due to their ſentence and opinion, and unleſs there be very clear evidence to the contrary, I ought rather to ſuſpect my own than theirs; yet whatſoever Teſtimonies and Decrees are propounded by the Church, they are propounded to rational men; and it muſt neceſſarily be ſuppoſed, that men ought to exerciſe that reaſon which God hath endowed them withall, in judging of the evidence upon which thoſe Teſtimonies and Decrees are built, which evidences, if they do not prove convincing and ſatisfactory, they cannot command their own belief; much leſs can any Power or Authority do it. For, to act by an implicit faith in that caſe were to act more like Brutes than Men. And therefore though we willingly own that there is as much

credit

credit due to them, as to Civil Magiſtrates in the like caſe, yet can we not grant any more. Or if their Teſtimonies and Decrees concern matters of Fact, wherein our Obedience is required, *i. e.* matters of Diſcipline, which reſpect the order and decency of Religion, we grant that obedience is due to them, and as much obedience as is due to Civil Magiſtrates in the like caſe; yet ſtill a Judgment of diſcretion is to be allowed to the Subject, how far he can with a ſafe Conſcience actively obey, and when and where he is to exerciſe his paſſive obedience. But this caution ought to be obſerved by every private Chriſtian, that by an imprudent management of his different Sentiments he do not diſturb the Peace, nor break the Order and Unity of the Church.

Qu. 11. *Or hath Chriſt left ſuch liberty to all ſucceeding Chriſtians, that they need not believe, credit, or obey any the Teſtimonies, Laws, Interpretations, or Sentences given by any ſupreme Legal Governours, Civil or Eccleſiaſtical, in their reſpective Councils, further than every particular perſon in his private Judgment ſhall like, chuſe, and accept of?*

Anſ. This Query I take to be fully anſwered in the Anſwer to that immediately preceding, wherein the caſe is plainly ſtated. How far the Credit and Obedience of Inferiours is due to the Sentences and Determinations of their Superiours, whether Civil or Eccleſiaſtical. And therefore without ſaying the ſame things over again, or enlarging thereupon, I ſhall refer you thereunto.

Qu. 12. *Whether a few particular perſons, or ſome few of the Magiſtrates Civil or Eccleſiaſtical, for diſcontent or differing in Judgment, from the united body of the reſt, may under pretence of Conſcience or Reformation ſeparate themſelves from the United body and ſociety, and make new tranſlations and interpretations of written Laws different from the former, and by force and perſwaſion draw People from their old Society, Unity and Obedience, to new Congregations, Inſtitutions and Rules of their framing, oppoſite and deſtructive to the former?*

Anſ. This Query conſiſts of ſeveral parts, and therefore to give a direct and appoſite Anſwer thereunto, I ſhall endeavour to obviate the ſeveral parts thereof by theſe Propoſitions following, *Viz.*

1. That no perſon or number of men, whether they be private Perſons, or Magiſtrates Civil or Eccleſiaſtical, ought to ſeparate themſelves, on any pretence whatſoever, from the body of the One, Holy, Catholick and Apoſtolick Church.

2. That diſcontent or differing in Judgment only, are no ſufficient grounds of ſeparation from any particular Church, whereof we are Members

3. That a bare pretence of Conſcience and Reformation will not juſtifie

juſtifie a Schiſm, nor excuſe thoſe who are guilty of a Schiſmatical ſeparation either in Church or State. For, the peace of the whole Community is far more valuable than any private man's ſatisfaction, and ought not to be laid open to the attempts of any Schiſmatical pretenders whatſoever.

4. That the written and eſtabliſhed Laws of God or his Vicegerents upon Earth, are not reverſible, nor alterable by any man, or number of men. Becauſe they cannot pretend to that Authority, by which at firſt they were eſtabliſhed, and without that they cannot be altered. For, if we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Goſpel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accurſed, ſaith St. *Paul. Gal.* 1. 8.

5. That it is not lawfull for any perſon or perſons who are Members of an eſtabliſhed Church, either by force or perſwaſion to draw People from the Communion of that Church, and ſo break the Unity, and diſturb the Peace thereof; or by any Artifices whatſ ever either to undermine or batter down the Ramparts, *i. e.* the eſtabliſhed Laws and Conſtitutions of that Church.

Theſe Propoſitions put together, may ſuffice as a general Anſwer to this Query; but now to apply them to the matter in hand, *i. e.* the difference between us and the Church of *Rome*, for on that account was the Query propounded. And this I ſhall now do in theſe following particulars.

1. That the Church of *Rome* (though ſhe mightily pretend to it) is not that One, Holy, Catholick and Apoſtolick Church. That ſhe is a Member of the Catholick Church we grant, though we can ſcarce allow her to be a ſound Member thereof; but that ſhe ſhould pretend to be the One, Holy, Catholick and Apoſtolick Church, either diffuſive or repreſentative we cannot conſent, nor hath ſhe ever yet, or ever will be able to make good her claim thereunto.

2. That the preſent Church of *Rome* is guilty of a ſinfull and ſchiſmatical Separation from the United Body of the One, Holy, Catholick and Apoſtolick Church, we affirm. And that for theſe reaſons, 1. Becauſe ſhe uſurps an higher place and power in the Body Eccleſiaſtical, than of right is due unto her, thereby breaking the Union, and diſturbing the Peace of the Church. 2. Becauſe ſhe hath voluntarily divided the Catholick Church, both in Faith, Worſhip, and Government, by her innovations. 3. By ſeparating, both by her Doctrines and Cenſures, three parts of the Chriſtian World from her Communion, and as much as in her lyes, from the Communion of Chriſt. 4. By rebelling againſt general Councils, and uſurping an Authority over them. 5. By breaking or taking away all the lines of Apoſtolical

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Succeſſion except their own, and appropriating all Original Juriſdiction to themſelves. 6. By challenging a temporal power over Princes, either directly or indirectly, which hath been a great occaſion not only of Schiſm in the Church, but of Sedition and Rebellion in the State. All which inſtances have been charged upon, and made good againſt the Church of *Rome* by our Writers, and may be ſo again, whenever we are called to it.

3. It is not therefore we that have ſeparated from them, but they from us; whilſt we adhere to the united Body of the Holy, Catholick and Apoſtolick Church, which they have forſaken.

4. Nor is it we but they, who have altered the written and eſtabliſhed Laws of God and his Church, by adding new Articles of Faith, ſuch as were never delivered by Chriſt or his Apoſtles, nor taught by the primitive Church, nor compriſed in any of thoſe Creeds received by the Church; and making them neceſſary Conditions of their Communion. As the Doctrines of Supremacy and Infallibility, of Indulgences and Purgatory, of Tranſubſtantiation, *&c.*

5. It is they therefore, and not we, who by force and perſwaſion, and by all manner of Artifices, endeavour to draw People from the Unity and Obedience of the Holy Catholick Church, unto new Congregations, Inſtitutions and Rules of their own framing, oppoſite to, and deſtructive of the former. Like the Scribes and Phariſees of old, they compaſs Sea and Land to make one Proſelyte, and when he is made, they make him twofold more the Child of Hell than themſelves. *Matth.* 23. 15.

Qu. 13. *Whether Perſons ſo acting are better than Rebels and Uſurpers, or ſuch as* Simon Magus *and thoſe that deſerted the Apoſtles to follow him: and therefore to be avoided as Perſons ſeparated from the flock of Chriſt?*

Anſ. That they are no better than ſuch as he hath here named and deſcribed, we willingly grant; and upon that very account is it, that we now avoid Communion with the preſent Church of *Rome.*

Thus have I given an Anſwer, and I hope a ſufficient one, to theſe Enquiries; and that ſhort, without entring upon diſcourſes of things not demanded, or at leaſt, not implyed in thoſe demands; and ſo obſerved the Method propounded by the Enquirer.

An Explanation of Roman Catholick's *Belief concerning theſe* IV. *Points, Their* Church, Worſhip, Juſtification, *and* Civil Government, *as it was preſented to ſome Perſons of Quality for their particular Satisfaction.*

THeſe are four great Points, and if well and truly explained, the Explanation of them may be of very great uſe; but if otherwiſe, if he only guild the Pill, that the Patient may be more eaſily perſwaded to ſwallow it, it may prove of dangerous Conſequence; inſtead of informing, it may debauch the minds and underſtandings of men. Let us therefore look before we leap, let us conſider well whether this Explainer hath been honeſt and faithfull in his Explanation, before we receive all he ſaith for Goſpel. And for your aſſiſtance herein, I ſhall ſet down his own words, then animadvert thereupon, and when that is done, preſent you with both for your better ſatisfaction.

The EXPLAINER.

1. *We believe the Holy Scriptures to be of Divine Inſpiration and Infallible Authority, and whatſoever is therein contained we firmly aſſent unto as to the word of God, the Author of all truth.*

But ſince in the Holy Scriptures there are ſome things hard to be underſtood which the ignorant and unſtable wreſt to their own deſtruction, we therefore profeſs (for the ending of all *Controverſies in our Religion, and ſetling of Peace in our Conſciences) to ſubmit our private Judgments to the Judgment of the Church in a free general Council.*

The ANIMADVERTER.

1. The *Explainer* tells us that the *Roman Catholicks* do believe the Holy Scriptures to be of Divine Inſpiration and Infallible Authority, *&c.*

A very fair and good profeſſion, wherein we do heartily joyn with them; And is it not a great pity there ſhould be a ſecret reſerve to ſpoil and overthrow it? They believe this, but is this all they believe? Do they not believe alſo that ſome things which before the Church's definition of them might have been innocently disbelieved, yet after they are once defined and determined by the Church, to be matters of Faith, and of equal Authority with any other things delivered by Chriſt and his Apoſtles? Do they not believe alſo that ſome Apocry-

phal Books are of Divine Inſpiration alſo, and of as infallible Authority as the Writings of the Prophets and Apoſtles? Do they not believe Traditions to be the unwritten Word of God, to be divinely inſpired, and of Equal infallible Authority with the written Word? If they do, then the *Explainer* hath not been ſo fair and candid, ſo juſt and faithfull as he ought to have been in his Explication; though he hath told us the truth, he hath not told us the whole truth. And that they do believe all this, though I might eaſily produce a Cloud of Witneſſes, and thoſe none of the leaſt admired of their own Authours; yet becauſe I deſign brevity, I ſhall content my ſelf at preſent with the Evidence and Authority of one of their moſt magnified Councils, which they call both free and general, (though in truth it was neither) and that is the Council of *Trent*. Which Seſs. 4 8. *Apr. de Canon. Script.* takes the Books of *Toby*, *Juduth*, *Eccleſiaſticus*, *Wiſdom*, and *Maccabees*, into the Canon of Scripture, (though they could not but know that they never were in the *Jewiſh* Canon, nor ever univerſally received by the Chriſtian Church) and anathematized all thoſe who do not upon this Declaration believe them to be Canonical. And the ſame Council, in the ſame Seſs. profeſſes to receive and reverence Traditions with no leſs pious Affection, than the Books of the Old and New Teſtament; and that not in matter of Rite and Hiſtory only, but of Faith and Manners alſo. Now what is this but to add to the Scriptures, and to accuſe them of inſufficiency and imperfection? And if ſo, then what doth this *Explainer* do, but deceive thoſe Perſons of Quality, to whom he preſents this as the Summ of their Belief?

But the *Explainer* goes on, and ſaith, ſince in the Holy Scriptures there are ſome things hard to be underſtood, which the ignorant and unſtable wreſt to their own deſtruction. And here I ſhall by the way only remarque theſe two things.

1. The Apoſtle indeed ſaith there are ſome things hard (but not impoſſible) to be underſtood. For, if men will uſe the means, if they will apply themſelves with an humble and teachable temper of mind diligently to reade the Holy Scriptures, if they will ſeriouſly meditate on what they reade, and earneſtly and devoutly pray unto God for the aſſiſtance and direction of his Holy Spirit therein; the difficulty may be removed, and they may be enabled rightly to underſtand thoſe Scriptures, at leaſt ſo far as is neceſſary for them to know.

2. The Apoſtle tells us, to whom thoſe things are hard to be underſtood, *viz.* the ignorant and unſtable. So that the difficulty ſeems to be not in the things themſelves, but in the incapacities of men. For, if men will be ignorant ſtill, and not uſe the means to know better; or if they will content themſelves with ſome airy Notions, which

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float and fluctuate in the brain, without ever endeavouring to bring them to a conſiſtency; not only ſome, but all things in Scripture, and even the cleareſt declarations of the Church may be hard to be underſtood by them, and ſo they will be as much at a loſs in the one as in the other. But how much this Text is miſunderſtood and miſapplied, a Reverend and Learned Divine of our Church, in a Treatiſe intituled, *Search the Scriptures*, hath plainly demonſtrated, to which I refer the Reader. But let us ſee what Inference he draws from hence, Therefore (ſaith he) we profeſs (for the ending of all Controverſies in our Religion, and ſettling of peace in our Conſciences) to ſubmit our private Judgments to the Judgment of the Church in a free General Council.

In which Inference I cannot but remarque theſe things.

1. This Inference doth plainly imply a neceſſity of a viſible Judge of Controverſies, to whom, in all matters in difference, there ſhould be an Appeal, and whoſe deciſion ſhould be final. Now if this be really ſo, Then, 1. It is mighty ſtrange that Chriſt and his Apoſtles, who pretended faithfully to deliver the whole mind and will of God to mankind, ſhould never once mention ſuch an Officer in the Church. Or, 2. If they ſhould omit to mention ſo neceſſary a thing in their writings, and only deliver it by word of mouth to their immediate Succeſſors, it is no leſs ſtrange that they ſhou'd either not know, or never make uſe of ſuch an Expedient for the ending of thoſe Controverſies that aroſe in their days. 3. We muſt conclude, that either the Church hath been mighty careleſs of her own peace, or that this Judge hath been very negligent in his buſineſs, to ſuffer ſo great and ſo fatal Controverſies to continue ſo long in the Church of God, when there was ſo ready a way to put an end to them.

2. Our *Explainer* in this Inference acquaints us with the great ends, for the ſake of which ſuch a Judge is neceſſary: *viz.* The ending of all controverſies in our Religion, and ſettling of peace in our Conſciences. Theſe indeed are great things, and greatly to be deſired. But whether there be any ſuch Expedient, or if there be, whether it be ſufficient for theſe ends, are the things in queſtion. Now, that from the firſt foundation of the Chriſtian Church to this very day, theſe great ends have not been univerſally attained, is very plain and evident; which to me is a very great Argument that either God never inſtituted any ſuch expedient, or if he did, that it was not ſufficient for theſe ends; which would be a mighty reflection upon the power and wiſedom of God.

But becauſe ſome things in Scripture are hard to be underſtood, doth it therefore neceſſarily follow that there muſt be a viſible Judge of Con-

troverſies, to deliver the ſenſe of thoſe places to us, without whom we can never attain thereunto, and from whoſe deciſion there lies no appeal? I confeſs I cannot ſee the neceſſity of this conſequence: For, if it be granted, as it is on all hands, that the Scriptures which we now have are the Word of God, reveal'ed by him, and of infallible Authority, we muſt believe that either God would not, or could not explain his mind to the ſons of men in words as plain and intelligible as any ſuch Judge will or can do, or elſe there can be no ſuch neceſſity of any ſuch Judge upon that account. If there be no other way to attain the ſenſe of Scripture, but only the deciſion of ſuch a Judge, then what way or means is left us to underſtand the ſenſe of the declaration of that Judge? will there not want another Judge to determine that, and another to explain his, and ſo *in infinitum?*

But let us for once ſuppoſe, though we do not grant it, that there ought to be a Judge of Controverſies in order to the attaining of theſe great ends, let us ſee how he ought to be qualified, and where we ſhall find him. This Judge muſt be a perſon or number of people, who muſt have a ſuperiority not only of order, but influence over all others, to whoſe deciſions and determinations all Chriſtian people ought to conform their judgments and practices. Nor muſt that influence be precarious but authoritative, for nothing can warrant their Impoſitions, but the Authority by which they are impoſed: Nor can any Authority ſuffice to oblige mankind to believe that, which is neither neceſſary as to its matter, nor evident as to its proof, antecedently to the definition of ſuch an Authority, but only ſuch an one as is infallible. Now where ſhall we find ſuch an one, ſeeing there are ſo many pretenders to it? If we believe the *Popes* themſelves, the *Jeſuits*, and the reſt of the high *Papalins*, then his holineſs will carry away the Bell; but if we believe General Councils, and thoſe who defend their Supremacy, then they will carry it from the *Pope*; and if we believe others of equal credit, then the Catholick Church diffuſive will carry it from both. So that if there ought to be ſuch a Judge, you ſee it is not agreed upon among themſelves who he is. But,

3. Our *Explainer* determines this Controverſie, telling us, that it is the Judgment of the Church in a free General Council, that we ought to ſubmit to.

And in this we heartily joyn with him, for we profeſs to have as great a deference for the Judgment of the Church in a free General Council, as they have or can have, and to have as great a regard to the ſenſe of the whole Chriſtian Church in all Ages ſince the Apoſtles as they, nay it may be greater than they will pretend to have; for, we are ſo far from declining it, that as to the matters in difference

difference between them and us, we appeal thereunto, and are willing to be concluded thereby; being as well assured as the Records of those Ages still remaining can assure us, that it is on our side. But if by *Church* here, he mean the present Church of *Rome*, as it stands divided from other Communions, we deny that she hath any more authority to impose a sense of Scripture upon us, than we upon her, or any other particular Church upon either of us. Or if by *Councils*, he mean those Western Councils which have been held in these parts of the World in latter Ages, we cannot allow them either to be free or general, and consequently cannot grant, nor have they any reason to claim any such authority over us. But if by *Councils*, he mean those primitive Councils, which indeed were the most free and general, and best deserved to be styled the Church Representative; we have so great a veneration for their Opinion and Judgment, that we shall not decline to submit the Umpirage of our Cause to them. But what is all this to the present Church of *Rome*, which at this day so arrogantly claims a right and authority to interpret Scripture, and impose her sense upon us? For, unless she can prove her self infallible, all her pretended authority in this case will fall to the ground: If she be indeed infallible, she would do well to let the world know whence she had her Infallibility. She must have it either immediately from God, or by delegation from the Catholick Church diffusive; If from God, let her produce her Charter; If from the Catholick Church diffusive, then it depends upon her authority, and by the same authority she may recall it again when she pleaseth: So that upon this ground it will prove but a very *Fallible Infallibility*. We know she challenges it by virtue of those promises of the Spirit in the Scriptures, which promises they themselves do confess to have been made only to the Catholick Church; and therefore, though an Infallibility, even in Judgment, were granted to belong to the Catholick Church, yet that can signifie nothing to her, till she hath proved her self to be that Catholick Church, to which alone those promises confessedly belong.

Thus you see how candid and faithfull our *Explainer* hath been in this first Point; and now let us examine whether he acquit himself any better in the next.

The EXPLAINER.

2. *We humbly believe the Sacred Mystery of the blessed Trinity, One Eternal Almighty and Incomprehensible God, whom onely we adore and worship, as alone having Sovereign Dominion over all things, to whom alone,* (1 Tim. 1. 17.) *we acknowledge as due from Men and Angels all Glory,*

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Service and Obedience; abhorring from our Hearts, as a moſt deteſtable Sacrilege, to give our Creator's Honour to any Creatures whatſoever. And therefore we ſolemnly proteſt, That by the Prayers we addreſs to Angels *and* Saints, *we intend no other than humbly to ſolicit their aſſiſtance before the Throne of God, as we deſire the Prayers of one another here upon Earth, not that we hope any thing from them as Original Authours thereof, but from God the Fountain of all Goodneſs through Jeſus Chriſt our onely Mediator and Redeemer.*

Neither do we believe any divinity or vertue to be in Images, for which they ought to be worſhipped, as the Gentiles *did their* Idols; *but we retain them with due and decent reſpect in our Churches, as Inſtruments, which we find by experience do often aſſiſt our memories and excite our affections.*

The ANIMADVERTER.

Our *Explainer* here, in behalf of the *Roman Catholicks*, makes a very good confeſſion of Faith, telling us, That they humbly believe the ſacred myſtery of the bleſſed Trinity, One Eternal, Almighty and Incomprehenſible God, whom only they adore and worſhip, as alone having Sovereign Dominion over all things, to whom alone (1 *Tim.* 1. 17.) they acknowledge as due, from Men and Angels, all glory, ſervice and obedience, abhorring from their hearts, as a moſt deteſtable Sacrilege, to give their Creator's honour to any Creatures whatſoever.

This is true Primitive Chriſtianity, good Catholick Divinity without any mixture of Popery, and is it not great pity that any thing ſhould be added thereto, or mixed therewith, to ſpoil ſo good a Confeſſion? Thus far we can readily and heartily joyn with them; but when they ſuperadd Articles of their own, ſuch as were never delivered by Chriſt or his Apoſtles, nor owned by the primitive Catholick Church, and ſet them in equal place with thoſe of Divine Revelation, and primitive practice; then we cannot keep pace with them, but are forced to ſtay behind, and ſit down contented with primitive Chriſtianity; ſo that in truth it is not we that leave them, but they that leave us, and conſequently are guilty of the Separation.

And this is the caſe here between us and our *Explainer*. For after all this glorious profeſſion of adoring and worſhipping the One Eternal Almighty and Incomprehenſible God and him only, and abhorring the giving of his glory to any Creatures as a moſt deteſtable Sacrilege; he introduceth Prayers to Saints and Angels, and the Worſhip of or before Images, as things equally neceſſary to be performed by Chriſtians. Now, if Prayers and Adoration be acts of religious worſhip, and the Objects to which they are offered be Creatures, then it muſt needs

needs follow, that either all Religious Worſhip is not due to God alone, or elſe that they do give part of his honour to ſomething that is not God. It is true indeed that he endeavours to palliate theſe practices with ſome pretended qualifications, thereby to ſhift off the weight of this charge which lieth ſo heavy upon them; but they are ſo thin and threedbare, ſo empty and inſignificant, and have been ſo miſerably baffled of late, eſpecially in the Anſwer to *A Papiſt Miſrepreſented and Repreſented*, as alſo in two other little Treatiſes, the one intituled *A Diſcourſe concerning Invocation of Saints*, printed in the year 1684, and the other intituled, *A Diſcourſe concerning the Object of Religious Worſhip*, &c. printed 1685, that I cannot but admire at our *Explainer*'s confidence to produce them at this time. Theſe Treatiſes are, or upon eaſie terms may be, in every man's hands; and there is therein ſo much ſaid upon this Subject, and ſo much to the purpoſe, as may very well ſpare me the labour of enlarging thereupon; to them therefore I ſhall refer the Reader for further ſatisfaction. But by theſe ſhort Remarques, which I have made upon this part of our *Explainer*'s Confeſſion, it is plain that he hath been no more candid and ingenuous in this than in the former. Let us therefore try him in the next.

The EXPLAINER.

3. *We firmly believe, that no force of Nature, or dignity of our beſt Works can merit our* Juſtification, *but we are Juſtified freely by Grace, through the redemption that is in* Jeſus Chriſt, *(Rom. 3. 24.) And though we ſhould by the grace of God perſevere unto the end in a godly life, and holy obedience to the Commandments; yet our hopes of eternal glory, are ſtill built upon the mercy of God, and the merits of* Chriſt Jeſus.

All other Merits, according to our ſenſe of the word, ſignifie no more than Actions done by the aſſiſtance of God's Grace, to which it hath pleaſed his goodneſs to promiſe a Reward. A Doctrine ſo far from being unſuitable to the ſenſe of the Holy Scriptures, that it is their principal deſign to invite and provoke us to a diligent obſervance of the Commandments, by promiſing Heaven as a reward of our obedience. 1 Tim. 4 8. Rom. 2. 6. Rom. 8. 13. Hebr. 6. 10. *Nothing being ſo frequently repeated in the word of God, as his gracious promiſes to recompence with everlaſting glory the Faith and Obedience of his Servants. Nor is the bounty of God barely according to our Works, but high and plentifull even beyond our Capacities, giving full meaſure, heaped up, and preſſed down, and running over, into the boſomes of all that love him.* Luke 6. 38.

Thus we believe the merit or rewardableneſs of holy living, (both which ſignifie the ſame thing with us) ariſe not from the ſelf value even of our beſt

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acts in us, as they are ours, but from the grace and bounty of God. And for our ſelves we ſincerely profeſs, when we have done all thoſe things which are commanded us, we are unprofitable Servants (Luke 17. 10.) *having done nothing but that which was our Duty; ſo that our boaſting is not in our ſelves, but all our Glory is in Chriſt.*

The ANIMADVERTER.

If this be really the Faith of *Roman Catholicks*, we ſhall not ſtick to acknowledge it is ours too, and then we ſhall have no occaſion to differ in this point. But I am afraid our ſo near an Agreement is too good news to be true; Our *Explainer*, I doubt, hath either miſtaken or to gain a Proſelyte, or for ſome other end which might be ſerviceable to Holy Church, hath very much miſrepreſented the Doctrine of his own Church in this point. For ſure I am, the Council of *Trent*, which they ſo much magnifie, and on whoſe deciſions they ſo much depend, hath a quite different Notion of Juſtification and Merit. That Council after ſome Months debate upon the Point of Juſtification, at laſt came to a deciſion, and declared, That the only formal Cauſe of our Juſtification is God's Juſtice, not by which he himſelf is juſt, but by which he makes us juſt; wherewith being endowed by him, we are renewed in the Spirit of our Minds, and are not only reputed, but are made truly juſt; receiving every man his own meaſure of juſtice, which the Holy Ghoſt divides to him, according to each man's prediſpoſition of himſelf, and co-operation. And withall denounceth a flat Anathema to all thoſe who ſhall dare to ſay, that we are formally juſtified by Chriſt's righteouſneſs, or by the ſole imputation of that righteouſneſs, or by the ſole remiſſion of our ſins, and not by our inherent grace, diffuſed into our hearts by the Holy Ghoſt. *Seſſ.* 6. *Can.* 10, 11. And the ſame Council, ſpeaking of the Merit of good Works, ſaith, If any man ſhall ſay, that the good Works of a juſtified Perſon do not truly merit the increaſe of Grace and eternal Life, let him be Anathema. *Seſſ.* 6 *Can.* 32.

Now one would think the choice were very eaſie, which of theſe to believe, whether the Council of *Trent* or this *Explainer*. The accounts they give are too different to be both believed; and can there be any queſtion which of them is moſt authoritative? Certainly our *Explainer* muſt be a very bold Perſon, who in defiance of ſuch a celebrated Council, durſt deliver what he hath done for the belief of *Roman Catholicks* in this point; and he muſt look upon his Perſons of Quality, to whom he preſents it, as a parcel of unthinking and inconſiderate Animals, who would ſwallow any thing without Examination.

Either

Either he was in earneſt, or he had a mind to put a cheat upon them; if the latter, he plainly diſcovers how good a Chriſtian, and how true a Catholick he is. If the former, ſurely he did not well conſider, how fatal the Conſequences of that Doctrine would be to the Church of *Rome*. For, 1. If this be really the Faith of *Roman Catholicks*, then, What becomes of that gainful Trade of Indulgences, which is wholly founded upon the Treaſure of the Church, wherein are heaped up piles of ſatisfactions of Saints, of which the Pope only keeps the Keys, and hath power to diſpenſe them where he liſts. There was a time indeed, when Indulgences were look'd upon to be nothing elſe but a Mitigation or Relaxation, upon juſt Cauſes, of Canonical Penances, which are or may be enjoyned by the Paſtors of the Church on penitent Sinners, according to their ſeveral Degrees of Demerits. But this is a Doctrine out of date with the preſent Church of *Rome*, inſomuch that *Greg. de Valentia* ſaith, That this Opinion differs not from that of the Hereticks, and makes Indulgences to be uſeleſs and dangerous things, *de Indulg. c.* 2. And their great Champion *Bellarmine*, among ſeveral other Arguments againſt this Doctrine, brings this for one, That if this were ſo, there would be no need of the Treaſure of the Church, which he takes a great deal of pains to prove to be the Foundation of Indulgences. But, 2. What will become of the profitable Doctrine of Purgatory, which is built upon Indulgences, and they upon the Treaſure of the Church, wherein the Merits of Saints are kept, to be diſpenſed by the Pope for the delivery of Souls out of Purgatory? But, 3. What will become of the Pope's Coffers, which being once emptied, and this Spring dried up, which ſhould have ſupplied them, can have no proſpect of any other ſo effectual way to repleniſh them again. Had our *Explainer* well conſidered theſe ill Conſequences of his Explanation, he would certainly have thought of it more than once, before he had expoſed it. I cannot imagine what ſhould perſwade him to ſuch an Explanation, unleſs he had obtained a diſpenſation to guild his Bait, the more eaſily to catch what he angled for. And if this be it, is it not a great Argument of the Candour and Ingenuity of our *Explainer*, and a mighty motive to his Perſons of Quality to ſwallow all that ſhall be propounded by him?

And now we are come to the laſt point which he undertakes to explain, and ſhall examine whether he be more ingenuous in that than he hath been in the other.

The EXPLAINER.

4. *We firmly believe and highly reverence the Moral Law, being ſo ſolemnly delivered to Moſes upon the Mount.* Exodus 20. Matth. 19. Eccleſ. 12 13. *ſo expreſly confirmed by our Saviour in the Goſpel, and containing in it ſelf ſo perfect an Abridgment of our whole Duty both to God and Man.*

Which Moral Law we believe obliges all men to proceed with faithfulneſs and ſincerity in their mutual Contracts one towards another, and therefore our conſtant profeſſion is, That we are moſt ſtrictly and abſolutely bound to the exact and intire performance of our promiſes made to any Perſons of what Religion ſoever, much more to the Magiſtrates and Civil Powers under whoſe Protection we live, whom we are taught by the Word of God to obey not only for fear but Conſcience ſake, and to whom we will moſt faithfully obſerve our Promiſes of Duty and Obedience, notwithſtanding any Diſpenſation, Abſolution, or other proceedings of any foreign Power or Authority whatſoever.

Wherefore we utterly deny and renounce that falſe and ſcandalous Poſition, That Faith is not to be kept with Hereticks, *as moſt uncharitably imputed to our Practices, and moſt unjuſtly pinned upon our Religion.*

Theſe we ſincerely and ſolemnly profeſs, as in the ſight of God, the ſearcher of all hearts, taking the words plainly and ſimply in their uſual and familiar ſenſe, without any Equivocation or Mental Reſervation whatſoever.

The ANIMADVERTER.

Our *Explainer* would have the World believe, that thoſe of his Communion do highly reverence, and have a mighty regard for the Moral Law. We do the ſame; but we know and believe the Second Commandment to be part of that Law, and therefore dare not be guilty of Image-Worſhip, which perhaps the *Explainer* did not think of.

He further tells us, that they believe, that this Law doth contain in it ſelf a perfect Abridgment of our whole Duty both to God and Man. We believe the ſame, and we do further believe, that whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. *James* 2. 10. And therefore we dare not worſhip Images, nor give divine Honour to any Creatures, nor diſobey Magiſtrates, nor deal falſly with our Neighbours under any pretence whatſoever, nor do any thing that is there forbidden, nor leave undone any thing that is there commanded. Whether the *Explainer* thought of all this, I know not; but he cannot but know that the Practices of thoſe of his Communion are not correſpondent thereunto. But

But the two great things that he would have the World believe of them upon the Credit of his Explanation, are these, *viz.* Their sincerity and Loyalty, which he would fain insinuate to be the natural Offspring of their Principles, and the constant Rule of their Practices. These therefore are the things which we are now to take under Consideration, and that we may be the more clear therein, I shall consider them severally.

1. And first as to their pretence of sincerity. The *Explainer* tells us, They believe, That the Moral Law obliges all men to proceed with faithfulness and sincerity in their mutual Contracts one towards another, and therefore their constant profession is, that they are most strictly and absolutely bound to the exact and intire performance of their promises made to any Person of what Religion soever. And as an Argument to evince the truth hereof, he farther tells us, that they utterly deny and renounce, that false and scandalous position, *That Faith is not to be kept with Hereticks*, as most uncharitably imputed to their Practices, and most unjustly pinned upon their Religion.

If this position, *That Faith is not to be kept with Hereticks*, be untruly charged upon them, then we must acknowledge that it were uncharitable to impute it to their practices, and unjust to pin it upon their Religion; but if it appear to be the Doctrine and Practice of their Church, then it will undoubtedly overthrow all their pretentions to *Faithfulness* and *Sincerity*.

And that this is really the Doctrine and Practice of their Church, we have the suffrage of a whole Council, by them styled General, *viz.* the Council of *Constance*, by whom this Doctrine was own'd, affirmed and practised. And *John Huss*, *Hierom* of *Prague*, and *Savanarola*, though they had the publick Faith for their safe conduct and return, yet in defiance thereof, by virtue of this Doctrine, they were proceeded against, and severely suffered. The same thing was also fiercely disputed in the Diet at *Worms*, in the case of *Luther*. And had not *Cæsar* been a better Christian than the Ecclesiasticks, and more a Gentleman than his Holyness, *Luther*, notwithstanding his Safe Conduct, had not returned safely from thence. But lest any secular Princes hereafter, should, either through Scruple of Conscience, or in point of honour, think themselves obliged to keep their Word, and so hinder them of their prey when it is in their hands; the Doctrine is now improved, and we are told, There are two distinct Tribunals, and the Ecclesiastical is the Superiour: and therefore, if a secular Prince gives his Subjects a Safe Conduct, he cannot extend it to the superior Tribunal, nor by any security given hinder the Bishop or the Pope to exercise their Jurisdiction. *Becanus in Theol. Scholast.*

This Doctrine is alſo confidently taught, and the practice thereof encouraged by their moſt eminent Doctors and Caſuiſts. Some inſtances whereof (for it would fill a Volume to give you all) I ſhall now preſent you with for your better ſatisfaction in this point.

Cardinal *Tolet. de inſtruct. Sacerd. l.* 1. *c.* 13. expreſly avows, That if a man be bound by the Bond of Fidelity or Oath, he ſhall be freed from that Bond, if he, to whom he is bound, fall into Excommunication; and during that, Debtors are abſolved from the Obligation of paying to the Creditor that debt which is contracted by words. And the ſame *Tolet. l.* 4. *c.* 21, 22. poſitively declares, That Equivocation upon Oath before a Magiſtrate is lawfull.

Thomas à Jeſu the Carmelite, *de coverſ Gentium, dub.* 4. *p.* 218. puts this queſtion, Whether one that denyeth it, when he is asked by an Heretick whether he be a Prieſt, or a Religious man, or whether he heard divine Service, doth ſin againſt the Confeſſion of Faith? To which he anſwers, No. For that is no denying himſelf to be a Chriſtian or Catholick. For it is lawfull to diſſemble or hide the Perſon of a Clergyman, or a Religious man, without a Lye in words, leſt a man be betrayed and in danger of his life; and for the ſame cauſe he may lay by his Habit, omit Prayers, and becauſe humane Laws for the moſt part bind not the Subjects Conſcience, when there is great hazard of life, as in this caſe *Azorius* hath well taught.

And Cardinal *Tolet. de Inſtruct. Sacerd. l.* 8. *c.* 39. *n.* 4. thus determines a Caſe propounded. If (ſaith he) the times be hard, or the Judge unequal; a man that cannot ſell his Wine at a due price, may lawfully make his meaſures leſs than is appointed; or mingle water with his Wine and ſell it for pure, ſo he do not lye; and yet if he doth, it is no mortal ſin, nor obligeth him to reſtitution. A man may ſwear to poſitive untruths by the Law of directing the Intention, ſaith *F. Southwel, Tract. de Equivocat. c.* 8. *p.* 42, 43.

If a man hath taken an Oath of a thing honeſt and lawfull, and in his power; yet if it hinders him from doing a greater good, the Pope can diſpenſe with his Oath, and take off the obligation, ſaith *Canus* Biſhop of the *Canar. Relect. de pœnitent.*

If a man hath promiſed to a Woman to marry her, and is betrothed to her, and hath ſworn it; yet if he will, before the Conſummation, enter into a Monaſtery, his Oath ſhall not bind him, his promiſe is null; but his ſecond promiſe that ſhall ſtand. He that denies this is accurſed by the Council of *Trent. Seſs.* 8. *Can.* 6.

I am weary with tranſcribing ſuch nauſeous ſtuff, and therefore omitting many more, I ſhall only add one inſtance more. Pope *Pius* V. upon occaſion of ſome Miſſionaries to be ſent into *England*, declared, That

That if they were ſummon'd before the Judges, they might *Sophiſticè jurare & Sophiſticè reſpondere*; and that they were not bound to anſwer according to the intention of the Judges, but according to ſome true ſenſe of their own; *i. e.* which was made true by the help of a Mental Reſervation. *Apud. G. Abbot. de Mendacio, &c. in præf. p.* 6, *&c.*

By theſe inſtances you may perceive that the Doctors and Caſuiſts of the *Romiſh* Church are not of our *Explainer's* opinion; which to me is a very great Argument, that he hath not dealt ſo fairly and candidly as he ought to have done in his Explanation. It may be he will tell us that theſe were but private Perſons, and that the Doctrine of their Church is not to be meaſured by their private Opinions, which if he do, I ſhall readily own, That the private Opinions of particular men ought not, in reaſon, to be charged upon that Society to which they belong; And if ſo, then our *Explainer* ought not to take it amiſs, if we do not receive his Explanation as the Doctrine of that Church of which he pretends to be a Member. But if the united force of the Council of *Conſtance*, and that of *Trent* (both which they themſelves reckon to be General) with the concurrent opinions of ſo many eminent Doctours and Caſuiſts of their own Church too (none of which, that we know, have ever received the leaſt check for publiſhing their opinions) if theſe, I ſay, will outweigh any Authority which this Explanation can pretend to, then what becomes of all this goodly Profeſſion which he here makes? where ſhall we find all that faithfulneſs and ſincerity which he here boaſts of? if making and breaking of promiſes, if ſwearing and forſwearing, if the violation of all the moſt ſacred Bonds, wherewith mankind can be obliged, may paſs for faithfulneſs and ſincerity, we may expect great ſtore of it amongſt them. And indeed whilſt there is a power given to the Pope to diſpenſe with Oaths and Promiſes, and a liberty given to the People to make good all they ſay or ſwear by the Law of directing the Intentions, by the Power of Equivocation, and the force of Mental Reſervation, I cannot ſee any reaſon why we ſhould expect better. But if this be the Faithfulneſs and Sincerity they boaſt of, we bleſs God that we know none ſuch amongſt us; and we hope this will never prove an Argument ſufficient to perſwade any of ours to deſert the Communion they are of, for a Communion that allows ſuch things as theſe. And thus have I given you an account of their Faithfulneſs and Sincerity.

2. The other thing which he boaſts of is, *their Loyalty*. For he tells us, They are moſt ſtrictly and abſolutely bound to an exact and entire

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performance of their promiſes made to the Magiſtrates and Civil Powers under whoſe protection they live, whom they are taught by the word of God to obey, not only for fear but Conſcience ſake, and to whom they will moſt faithfully obſerve their promiſes and duty of Obedience, notwithſtanding any diſpenſation, abſolution, or other proceedings of any foreign Power or Authority whatſoever.

We do indeed firmly believe, That both they, and we, and all Subjects are moſt ſtrictly and abſolutely bound to an exact and entire performance of all thoſe promiſes which we make to Magiſtrates and Civil Powers, and that there is no power on earth either Foreign or Domeſtick that can diſpence with our Oaths and Promiſes, or abſolve us from our Duty and Allegiance. But whether this be the Belief of *Roman Catholicks* we are not ſo well aſſured: If we will take it upon the bare word of our *Explainer*, it is; but having found him faulty and diſingenuous in the former points, we may ſuſpect him in this, and therefore muſt not ſwallow all that he ſaith for Goſpel, till we have examined it. We very well know that the Doctrines of learned and allowed Caſuiſts, and Practices of thoſe who have greateſt authority in the *Roman Church* have been quite contrary to this Explanation, and we never found any diſpoſition in them to ſo great a condeſcenſion, nor ever heard that there was any ſuch Reformation made in their principles and practices by any publick Authority among them. If our *Explainer* had produced any authentick Records of any ſuch thing, we ſhould with a great deal of readineſs and rejoycing have embraced them; but we cannot admit of his bare word as a ſufficient evidence in this caſe.

Our bleſſed Saviour aſſureth us, that no man can ſerve two Maſters, *Matth.* 6. 24. Whilſt therefore thoſe of the *Roman* Communion do own the Pope as Supreme Head of the Church, and allow him a ſovereign and uncontrollable power over them both in Temporals and Spiritual's, by virtue of which he can diſpenſe with their Oaths and Promiſes when he pleaſeth; we cannot ſee how they can be ſo exact in the performance of their promiſes made to Civil Powers. For, it is not only poſſible but often happens, that the Civil Power, under whoſe protection they live, doth not own the Papacy, nor hath any regard for the pretended power and dominion thereof; and in ſuch a caſe it is very likely, their commands will interfere: which if they do (as we know they very often do) how a *Roman* Catholick will carry himſelf even, and ſo exactly divide his obedience to theſe different Sovereigns, and their different commands, as to pleaſe both, I cannot as yet imagine. How our *Explainer* will reſolve this caſe, I know not; but I very well know, that the Doctors and Caſuiſts of the *Roman Church*,

Church, and their Popes too, will roundly tell us, That the Power of the Pope is ſuperiour to that of the Prince, and therefore he is to be obeyed in the firſt place. And if ſo, then what becomes of all that Loyalty and Fidelity to Civil Powers, which our *Explainer* ſo much boaſts of?

To ſhew you therefore, that notwithſtanding this ſo ſpecious Explanation of their Faith in this point, we have ſufficient reaſon to ſuſpect the candour and ingenuity of the *Explainer*, and the truth of what he ſays; I ſhall only confront him with the declared Doctrines, and avowed Practices of their own Church in this caſe.

All the Juriſdiction of all the Kings and Princes of the World dependeth on the Pope, ſaith *P. Clem.* 5. *in Concil. Vienn.*

And Pope *Pius* 5. in his Bull againſt Queen *Elizabeth*, doth ſtrictly will and command all her Subjects to take Arms againſt that Heretical and Excommunicate Queen.

The Depoſing and King-killing Doctrine, diſpenſing with Oaths of Allegiance, *&c.* were made Articles of their Faith, by the fourth General Council at *Lateran*, under Pope *Innocent* 3.

And it is pleaſant to obſerve how nicely ſcrupulous ſome of their great men are in reſolving this caſe, gravely telling us, That private men may not kill a King till he be depoſed; but if once he be excommunicate, then he is no King; (and then they may kill him without ſcruple) Or if he be an Heretick (which the Pope can make him when he pleaſeth) then they may kill the Heretick, but not the King. Thus *Suarez adverſ. Sect. Anglic. l.* 6. *c.* 4. *Sect.* 14. And *c.* 6. *Sect.* 22. 24. Thus alſo *Azorius* the *Jeſuite. Inſtit. Moral. part.* 1. *l.* 8. *c.* 13 And thus *Mariana, de Reg. Inſtit. l.* 1. *c.* 7, &c.

The Rebellion of a Clergyman againſt his Prince is not Treaſon, becauſe he is not his Prince's Subject, ſaith *Emman. Sá. Aphor. verb. Clericus.*

When a Prince is Excommunicate, before the Denunciation, the Subjects are not abſolved from their Oath of Allegiance, (as *Cajetan* ſays well) yet when it is denounced, they are not only abſolved from their Obedience, but are bound not to obey, unleſs the fear of Death, or loſs of Goods excuſe them, which was the caſe of the *Engliſh* Catholicks in the time of *Henry* the Eighth, ſaith *Card. Tolet. concer. Eccleſ. in Angl. fol.* 336.

It is the Sentence of all Catholicks, that Subjects are bound to expell Heretical Princes, if they have ſtrength enough, and that to this they are tyed by the Commandment of God, the moſt ſtrict tye of Conſcience, and the extreme danger of their Souls, ſaith *F. Creſwel, in Philopat. Sect.* 2. *n.* 160, 161.

Nay,

Nay even before the Sentence is declared, though the Subjects are not bound to it, yet lawfully they may deny Obedience to an Heretical Prince, ſaith *Greg. de Valentia, Tom* 3 *diſp.* 1. *q.* 12. *punct.* 2.

An Excommunicate King may with impunity be depoſed or killed by any one, ſaith *Suarez, Defenſ. Fid. l.* 6 *c.* 6. *Sect.* 24.

The Pope can make, that he who is a King, ſhall be no King, and then you are diſobliged, ſaith *Bellarm. contr. Barcl. c.* 7.

The Secular power is ſubject to the Spiritual. The Pope hath a ſovereign power over Chriſtian Kings and Princes, to correct, depoſe, and appoint others in their places. If a King be guilty of Hereſie, Schiſm, or any intolerable crime againſt his People; if he be guilty of negligence or ſloth in his government; if he fail in the performance of his Oaths and Promiſes, or oppreſs the Church; the Pope may diveſt him of his Royal Dignity; ſaith *Abrah. Brovius, de Pontif. Roman. c.* 46. *p.* 621. *Col.* 2. Which Book was printed at *Cologne, Anno* 1619. and ſolemnly recommended and approved by his Superiours, and Licenſed by the Apoſtolick Inquiſitor.

I might be infinite in inſtances of this kind, but having almoſt wearied my ſelf with raking in ſuch a Dunghill, I am not willing to tire my Reader too. I ſhall therefore only produce one unexceptionable Witneſs more, and that ſhall be their great and renowned Champion *Bellarmine*, out of whoſe 5th. Book *De Romano Pontifice*, I ſhall take the pains to tranſcribe ſome paſſages; and having ſubjoyned thereunto ſome inſtances of their practices ſuitable to their declared principles, I ſhall then leave it to the judgment of any indifferent perſon, what kind of Loyalty and Fidelity Sovereign Princes (eſpecially thoſe who are of a different perſuaſion) may hope to find from their *Roman Catholick* Subjects.

Bellarmine in the firſt Chapter of his fifth Book *De Romano Pontifice*, having rejected two extreme Opinions concerning the Pope's power; the one taught and maintained by *Auguſtinus Triumphus, Alvarus Pelagius, Hoſtienſis*, and others of his own Communion, *viz.* That the Pope by a Divine Right hath a moſt plenary power over all the World as well in Political as Eccleſiaſtical affairs. And the other delivered by *Calvin, Peter Martyr, Brentius* and others whom he calls Hereticks, *viz.* That the Pope, as Pope, hath not by Divine Right any Temporal power at all, nor upon any account can command Secular Princes, much leſs deprive them of their Kingdoms and Principalities; and that Spiritual perſons ought not to exerciſe Temporal Dominion. He at laſt lays down a middle Opinion between both, which he tells us is the common Opinion of Catholick Divines, *viz. That the Pope, as Pope, hath not directly and immediately any Temporal power,*

power, but only a ſpiritual: yet by virtue of that Spiritual power he hath indirectly at leaſt a ſupreme power in Temporals."

This Opinion he undertakes to explain in his Sixth Chapter, where he tells us, That in Order to a Spiritual good, he hath a Supreme Power of diſpoſing all the Temporal things of all Chriſtian People.

Which Power is juſt ſuch over Princes, as the Soul hath over the Body or ſenſitive Appetite; by Virtue of this Power he may change Kingdoms, and take them from one and give them to another; he may make and alter, ſuſpend and abrogate Civil Laws, as the Chief Spiritual Prince, if it be for the ſafety of Souls.

In his Seventh Chapter he endeavours to prove this Exorbitant Power of the Pope by reaſons; all which are founded in the Subordination and Subjection of the Temporal to the Spiritual Sword, (which is a Foundation that will certainly fail him.) However upon this Foundation he thus builds.

The Eccleſiaſtical Republick can command and compel the Temporal, which is indeed its Subject, to change the Adminiſtration, and to depoſe Princes, and to appoint others, when it cannot otherwiſe defend the Spiritual good. And again, it is not lawfull for Chriſtians to ſuffer an Infidel or Heretical King, if he endeavour to draw his Subjects to his Hereſie or Unbelief. But to judge whether a King do draw to Hereſie or not, belongeth to the Pope, to whom the Care of Religion is committed; therefore it belongs to the Pope to judge whether a King be to be depoſed or not. And if any one ask why the Chriſtians of old, did not depoſe *Nero*, and *Diocletian*, and *Julian* the Apoſtate, and *Valens* the *Arian*? He roundly anſwers, it was not becauſe they wanted Right, but becauſe they wanted Power to do it.

But leſt any ſcrupulous Chriſtian ſhould boggle at thoſe horrid things, which theſe declared Principles muſt of neceſſity lead them to, as Rebellion, Murder, Breach of Faith, Violation of Oaths, *&c.* He will tell them that they are not anſwerable for any of theſe things; For, if the Pope ſhould miſtake, and command Vice, and forbid Vertue; yet it were a ſin againſt Conſcience, for the Church not to believe thoſe Vices to be good, and thoſe Vertues to be evil.

All theſe inſtances that I have now laid before you, were of men who lived and died in the Communion of the Church of *Rome*, and moſt of them men of great Eminency both for their Parts and Places; and therefore very likely to underſtand the Religion they profeſſed. Now either theſe men, or our *Explainer* muſt be very much out, and ſtrangely unacquainted with the Principles of their Religion; or elſe the *Explainer* muſt induſtriouſly deſign to put a cheat upon thoſe Perſons of Quality to whom he preſents his Scheme. For, nothing can

be more different than his Explanation, and this Declaration which theſe men have left upon Record. But, I think, the choice is very eaſie which of theſe ought to be believed in this caſe; and if this Cloud of Witneſſes carry it (as undoubtedly they will) againſt one ſingle unauthorized *Explainer*, then certainly he was in the wrong box, when the ſo much boaſted of the Loyalty of the *Roman Catholicks*.

And now I ſhall only ſubjoyn an account of ſome few of their Practices, correſpondent to theſe Principles, and they being put together will, I ſuppoſe, ſufficiently diſcover the miſtake of our *Explainer*.

Leo Iſaurus Emperour of *Conſtantinople* was excommunicated by Pope *Gregory* the IId. his Country given away to the *Lombards*; by which means he and his Succeſſors loſt all the Weſtern Empire, which the Pope and the *French* King afterwards ſhared between them.

Henry the IVth. Emperour of *Germany* was excommunicated by Pope *Gregory* the VIIth. his Subjects abſolved from their Obedience, *Rodulph* Duke of *Sueden* and *Burgundy* ſet up againſt him, to whom a Crown was ſent by the Pope, with this Inſcription, *The Rock gave the Crown to* Peter, *and* Peter *gives it to* Rodulph.

Childericus King of *France*, by the Advice and Authority of Pope *Zachary* the Ift. had his Head ſhaven, was thruſt into a Monaſtery, and *Pipinus* Son of *Carolus Martellus* (who was but a Subject and Servant to the King) was anointed King in his ſtead.

Henry the IIId. King of *France* was killed at the Siege of *Paris*, with an empoyſoned Knife by a *Jacobine* Fryar called *Jaques Clement*: Which Murther, Pope *Sixtus* the Vth. by a ſolemn Oration in the Conſiſtory *September* the 2*d*. 1589. commended to the Skies, as *Rarum, inſigne, & memorablile facinus*. So publickly was the King killing Doctrine owned by them at that time.

And what effect this Papal approbation did produce, is evident; for upon this encouragement King *Henry* the IVth. Succeſſor to *Henry* the IIId. was alſo ſtabbed with a conſecrated Dagger, by a Jeſuite named *Ravilliac*. How frequent the excommunicating and depoſing of Princes, the abſolving of Subjects from their Duty and Obedience, and the ſtirring up of Tumults and Seditions againſt them by Popes and Papalins, hath heretofore been; Hiſtory is ſo full, that it would be an Herculean labour to tranſcribe all the inſtances thereof.

Now theſe declared Principles and avowed Practices of *Roman Catholicks* being put together, and compared with our *Explainer*'s profeſſion; may ſufficiently evince how much he hath abuſed thoſe Perſons of Quality, and how unfairly and diſhoneſtly he hath dealt with them in his Explanation of the *Roman Catholick*'s Belief in this Point.

But

But one would think he durſt not deal thus, conſidering what a ſolemn Proteſtation he makes in the Cloſe of his Explanation; For, thus he concludes.

Theſe we ſincerely and ſolemnly profeſs, as in the ſight of God the ſearcher of all Hearts, taking the words plainly and ſimply in their uſual and familiar ſenſe, without any Equivocation or Mental Reſervation whatſoever.

Were we not ſo well acquainted with the Power of Diſpenſations, and the force of Mental Reſervation among them; did we not know that by theſe Artifices they can elude the moſt ſolemn Proteſtations, make void all Oaths and Promiſes, and diſſolve any the moſt ſacred Bonds which can be invented to oblige men; it would look very uncharitably to ſuſpect any man after ſuch a ſolemn Proteſtation. But that they can do all this, and think they can do it with a ſafe Conſcience, notwithſtanding their Proteſtation to the contrary, is a ruled Caſe among their Caſuiſts: I ſhall only at preſent trouble you with one inſtance, which is very applicable to the caſe in hand, and with that conclude.

On occaſion of the Powder-plot here in *England*, an Oath of Allegiance was thought neceſſary to prevent ſuch horrid attempts in time to come; which a *Roman* Doctor (cited by Arch-Biſhop *Uſher* under this Character, B. P. Ἐξέτασ. *Epiſtol. I. R. Impreſ. An.* 1609.) taking notice of, laughs aloud at the ſimplicity of it. His words are worth remembring, *Sed vide in tanta aſtutia, quanta ſimplicitas! &c.* But ſee what ſimplicity here is in ſo great Craft! When he had placed all his ſecurity in that Oath, he thought he had framed ſuch a manner of Oath, with ſo many Circumſtances, which no man could any way diſſolve with a ſafe Conſcience. But he could not ſee, that if the Pope diſſolve the Oath, all its Knots, whether of being faithfull to the King, or of admitting no Diſpenſation, are accordingly diſſolved. Yea, I will ſay a thing more admirable; you know, I believe, that an unjuſt Oath, if it be evidently known to be ſuch, or openly declared ſuch, it obligeth no man: That the King's Oath is unjuſt, is ſufficiently declared by the Paſtor of the Church himſelf. You ſee now that the Obligatian of it is vaniſhed into ſmoke, and that the Bond which ſo many wiſe men thought was made of Iron, was leſs than Straw.

F I N I S.